

Motivation and instructional preferences

— are English majors different
from non-English majors? —

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Introduction

The Faculty of Foreign Languages at Kyoto Sangyo University started the Special English program in the spring of 2003 to offer practical English classes. Students who are majoring in foreign languages including English, German, French, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Italian, and Indonesian can take classes that meet their needs and proficiency levels. The classes offered are Pronunciation, Communicative Grammar, Travel English, Business English, Cinema English, Music English, News English, Airline English, TOEIC Preparation, Discussion, and Bestseller Reading. These classes have mixed students in terms of genders, majors, and years in school. One of the purposes of this program is to give non-English majors a chance to study English because we understand that many of the non-English majors wanted to major in English but couldn't because of their high-school grades, and that higher English ability generally gives them more chances of getting a job than proficiency in another foreign language. As we anticipated, half of the enrollment in the program has been non-English majors, and this makes me wonder if they have higher instrumental motivation than English majors.

This study was conducted to investigate if English majors and non-English majors would show any difference in motivation and also in instructional preferences. It is hoped that this study can serve as part of the program evaluation and change the program to better meet our students' needs, since whether student expectations are met or not may have washback effect on their motivation as well (Schmidt, Boraie, & Kassabgy, 1996).

Relevant Studies

Gardner (1985) defined motivation as “the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language” (p.10). Gardner and Lambert (1972) and Gardner (1985) described the concepts of the integrative orientation and the instrumental orientation. Orientation is different from motivation and it “represents the reasons for studying the language” (Williams & Burden, 1997). The integrative orientation represents the reasons to study the L2 to interact with the L2 members. The instrumental orientation represents the reasons to study the L2 for practical purposes such as getting a job or

passing an exam. College students seem to be “primarily motivated by instrumental reasons” (Schmidt et al., 1996). Although it was originally suggested that the integrative orientation is more important for higher achievement of the L2, this view has been challenged by a lot of researchers (Williams & Burden, 1997).

Not only the importance of the integrative orientation but also the differential importance of the integrative and instrumental orientations has been questioned, and other possible kinds of motivation have been discussed (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). One alternative model “that has received the attention of several scholars is the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation” (Noels, Pelletier, & Vallerand, 2000, p.60). Intrinsic motivation is “motivation to engage in an activity because that activity is enjoyable and satisfying to do” (Noels et al., 2000, p.61). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is motivation “that is not regulated by the pleasure of engaging in the challenging and competence-building activity per se, but rather by factors apart from the activity” (Noels, 2001, p.110). Williams and Burden (1997) suggested that a general guideline to ask should be if I would “do this even if no reward or punishment followed” (p.123). This distinction has influenced studies of motivation and has been widely used to explain motivational difference between different learners (Williams and Burden, 1997). It has been suggested that stronger intrinsic motivation leads to better and more positive learning outcomes (Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 1999; Ramage, 1990).

However, as Kimura, Nakata, and Okumura (2001) pointed out, it is difficult to divide motivation into two groups such as integrative-instrumental, or intrinsic-extrinsic. They suggested that these four types should have overlaps. Schmidt et al. (1996) suggested that both integrative motivation and instrumental motivation should be “seen as subtypes of extrinsic motivation, since both are concerned with goals or outcomes” (p.14).

It is obvious that motivation and language learning will be affected by the social context and culture the learners are in (Noels et al., 2000; Schmidt et al., 1996; Williams & Burden, 1997). Whether motivations are different between second language learners and foreign language learners has been repeatedly questioned (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Although it has been suggested that integrative motivation is “critical for L2 acquisition,” it now seems that “it is not fundamental... but has relevance only in specific sociocultural contexts” (Noels et al. 2000). Integrative motivation is much more important for second language learners, but far less relevant to foreign language learners (Dornyei, 1990; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Second language learners “must learn to live in the new culture and communicate fluently in the target culture” whereas foreign language learners are “separated in space and attitude from the target culture” (Oxford & Shearin, 1994, p.15). In other words, instrumental motivation is much more meaningful in EFL contexts such as in Japan (Dornyei, 1990; Oxford, 1996; Williams & Burden, 1997).

The purpose of this study is exactly what Schmidt, Boraie, and Kassabgy (1996) stated: “The

topic of motivation is of practical interest to language program designers and administrators who want to attract students to programs that will motivate them to learn by being congruent with their needs and interests, to teachers, who would like to use pedagogical techniques that reinforce and develop student motivation” (p.10). As a program coordinator and also a teacher, I would like to investigate the following two questions.

1. Is there any difference in motivation of studying English and instructional preferences between English majors and non-English majors?
2. Do non-English majors, who should be busy enough to study another foreign language of their major but still are taking our English classes, have higher extrinsic motivation?

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were 138 students, who were taking and actually showed up in my classes (i.e., Pronunciation, Communicative Grammar, Airline English, and TOEIC Preparation) during the week of December 11, 2006. I was originally going to ask the other teachers in the program to conduct the same survey in their classes, but I had to give up the idea because of time constraint. Out of 138 students, 68 were English majors and 70 were non-English majors; 106 were females and 32 were males; 60 were freshmen, 43 were sophomores, 29 were juniors, and 6 were seniors.

Procedures

It is difficult but important to design motivation questionnaires that have appropriate items for the population under study (Dornyei, 2001; Gardner, 1985). The questionnaire items were adapted mostly from the study of Schmidt et al. (1996) and some from the study of Nakata (2006). The questionnaire consisted of 31 items, which includes five items dealing with Intrinsic Motivation, ten items dealing with Extrinsic Motivation, five items dealing with Anxiety, and eleven items dealing with Instructional Preferences. The items were randomized to avoid ordering effects (Brown, 2001). The participants were asked to rank each statement using a 6-point Likert scale (i.e., 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Slightly disagree; 4 = Slightly agree; 5 = Agree; 6 = Strongly agree). The choice of Neutral was not included to prevent the participants from taking such an undecided attitude, which is often seen among Japanese students.

The data was first analyzed with a factor analysis, and then subjected to an analysis of variance (ANOVA) using factor scores for each factor.

Results and Discussion

First the 20 items dealing with motivation, including Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation and Anxiety, were analyzed. A principal component analysis (PCA) was performed using SPSS. Prior to performing the PCA, the suitability of data was assessed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .73 and the Barlett's Test of Sphericity was significant, which supports the

adequacy for conducting the PCA.

A principal components analysis revealed the presence of five components with eigenvalues exceeding 1.2, explaining 18.1 per cent, 14.8 per cent, 10.2 per cent, 6.7 per cent, and 6.2 per cent of the variance respectively. An inspection of screeplot revealed a clear break after the third component, so it was decided to retain three components for further investigation. Three factors were rotated using a Varimax rotation. The results with a minimum loading set at .40 are shown in Table 1. Item 7 (I am learning English because my parents want me to improve my English.) did not load strongly on any factor, whereas Item 14 (I am learning English because I want to communicate with people throughout the world.) loaded strongly on two factors. Therefore, these two items were deleted, and another PCA was conducted. Then Item 9 (I am learning English because I want to spend a period of time in an English-speaking country.) did not load strongly on any factor, so it was deleted and another PCA was conducted. Table 2 shows the PCA results after deleting three items.

Table 1
Factor loadings from Principal components analysis for intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and anxiety

| Item | Factor loading | | |
|------|----------------|------|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13 | .78 | | |
| 8 | .66 | | |
| 15 | .60 | | |
| 5 | .58 | | |
| 12 | .54 | | |
| 10 | .52 | | |
| 11 | .50 | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 3 | | .81 | |
| 1 | | .77 | |
| 2 | | .63 | |
| 4 | | -.59 | |
| 6 | | .56 | |
| 14 | .40 | .49 | |
| 9 | | .43 | |
| 18 | | | .72 |
| 19 | | | .69 |
| 17 | | | .66 |
| 16 | | | .65 |
| 20 | | | .61 |

Factor 1 received loadings from Items 5 (I wish I could learn English in an easier way, without going to class.), 8 (Being able to speak English will add my social status; other people respect me more.), 10 (I want to learn English because it is useful when traveling in many countries.), 11 (I am learning English to become more educated.), 12 (My goal in learning English is to get a qualification such as STEP, TOEFL, or TOEIC.), 13 (If I learn English better, I will be able to get a better job.), and 15 (Increasing English proficiency will have financial benefits for me.). Item 5, which is reverse-coded, is the only item from Intrinsic Motivation, and the other items

are from Extrinsic Motivation. Interestingly, Cronbach's α would increase from .55 to .72 if Item 5 were deleted. This factor was labeled as Extrinsic Motivation.

Table 2
Factor loadings for intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and anxiety after deleting three items

| Item | Factor loading | | |
|------|----------------|------|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13 | .78 | | |
| 8 | .68 | | |
| 15 | .64 | | |
| 12 | .58 | | |
| 11 | .56 | | |
| 5 | .53 | | |
| 10 | .52 | | |
| 3 | | .82 | |
| 1 | | .76 | |
| 2 | | .71 | |
| 4 | | -.64 | |
| 6 | | .55 | |
| 18 | | | .72 |
| 19 | | | .69 |
| 17 | | | .66 |
| 16 | | | .66 |
| 20 | | | .62 |

Factor 2 received loadings from Items 1 (I enjoy learning English very much.), 2 (Learning English is a hobby for me.), 3 (Learning English is a challenge that I enjoy.), 4 (I don't enjoy learning English, but I know that learning English is important for me.), and 6 (English is important to me because it will broaden my view.). Item 6 is the only item from Extrinsic Motivation, and the others are from Intrinsic Motivation. Thus this factor was labeled Intrinsic Motivation. Cronbach's α was .74.

Factor 3 received strong loadings from Items 16 (I feel uncomfortable if I have to speak/answer in my English class.), 17 (It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.), 18 (I don't like to speak often in English class because I am afraid that my teacher will think I am not a good student.), 19 (I am afraid other students will laugh at me when I speak English.), and 20 (I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.), all of which were the items from Anxiety, and Cronbach's α was .72. This factor was labeled Anxiety.

Then factor scores were calculated and subjected to an analysis of variance (ANOVA). The independent variable, the major, had two levels: English and non-English. The dependent variables were the factor scores of each factor. Homogeneity of variances was checked and met. Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations of factor scores, and Table 4 shows the results of the ANOVA.

The ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the scores of Extrinsic Motivation, $F(1, 136) = 6.25, p = .01$.

Table 3

Means and standard deviations for factor scores of three factors of motivation

| | Extrinsic | | Intrinsic | | Anxiety | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| English | -.21 | 1.03 | .03 | .97 | .01 | .99 |
| non-English | .20 | .93 | -.03 | 1.03 | -.01 | 1.01 |

Table 4

One-way analysis of variance for factor scores of three factors of motivation

| | <i>df</i> | <i>SS</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Extrinsic | | | | |
| Between groups | 1 | 6.02 | 6.02 | 6.25* |
| Within groups | 136 | 130.99 | .96 | |
| Intrinsic | | | | |
| Between groups | 1 | .13 | .13 | .13 |
| Within groups | 136 | 136.87 | 1.01 | |
| Anxiety | | | | |
| Between groups | 1 | .01 | .01 | .01 |
| Within groups | 136 | 136.99 | 1.01 | |

* $p < .05$

Then the same analyses, using a factor analysis and an ANOVA, were conducted on the 11 items of Instructional Preferences. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .59 and the Barlett's Test of Sphericity was significant, which supports the adequacy for conducting the PCA.

A principal components analysis revealed the presence of three components with eigenvalues exceeding 1.2, explaining 22.0 per cent, 18.8 per cent, and 12.5 per cent of the variance respectively. An inspection of screeplot revealed a clear break after the second component, so it was decided to retain two components for further investigation. Two factors were rotated using a Varimax rotation, with a minimum loading set at .40. Items 8 (Listening and speaking should be emphasized in English class.) and 9 (I prefer an English class in which there are lots of activities that allow me to participate actively.) did not load strongly on any factor. Therefore, these two items were deleted, and another PCA was conducted. Table 5 shows the PCA results after deleting two items.

Table 5

Factor loadings for instructional preferences after deleting three items

| Item | Factor loading | |
|------|----------------|------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| 4 | .80 | |
| 7 | .71 | |
| 5 | .63 | |
| 3 | -.60 | |
| 10 | .55 | |
| 1 | | .80 |
| 2 | | -.75 |
| 11 | | .70 |
| 6 | | .46 |

Factor 1 received loadings from Items 3 (I like English learning activities in which students work together in pairs or small groups.), 4 (I prefer to work by myself in English class, not with

other students.), 5 (Grammar should be emphasized in English class.), 7 (Reading and writing should be emphasized in English class.), and 10 (I prefer to sit and listen, and don't like being forced to speak in English class.). This factor was labeled as Traditional Style. Cronbach's α was .68.

Factor 2 received loadings from Items 1 (During English class, I would like to have only English spoken.), 2 (In my English class, the teacher should explain things in Japanese sometimes in order to help us learn.), 6 (Pronunciation should be emphasized in English class.), and 11 (English classes should be taught by native speakers.). This factor was labeled Communicative Style. Cronbach's α was .63.

Then factor scores were calculated and subjected to an analysis of variance (ANOVA). The independent variable was the major, and the dependent variables were the factor scores of each factor. Homogeneity of variances was checked and met. Table 6 shows the means and standard deviations of factor scores, and Table 7 shows the results of the ANOVA.

Table 6
Means and standard deviations for factor scores of two factors of preferences

| | Traditional | | Communicative | |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| English | -.15 | 1.11 | .45 | .84 |
| non-English | .14 | .86 | -.44 | .95 |

Table 7
One-way analysis of variance for factor scores of two factors of preferences

| | <i>df</i> | <i>SS</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Traditional | | | | |
| Between groups | 1 | 2.86 | 2.86 | 2.90 |
| Within groups | 136 | 134.14 | .99 | |
| Communicative | | | | |
| Between groups | 1 | 27.37 | 27.37 | 33.96** |
| Within groups | 136 | 109.63 | .81 | |

** $p < .01$

The ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference at the $p < .01$ level in the scores of Communicative Style, $F(1, 136) = 33.96, p = .00$.

As a Japanese teacher of English, I was also curious if there would be any difference between English majors and non-English majors on Items 2 (In my English class, the teacher should explain things in Japanese sometimes in order to help us learn.) and 11 (English classes should be taught by native speakers.). Item 11 is the question I added on my own, inspired by Item 2. An ANOVA was conducted to compare the scores given to these two items by two groups of students. Homogeneity of variances was checked and met. Table 8 shows the means and standard deviations of the scores for each item, and Table 9 shows the results of the ANOVA.

The ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference at the $p < .01$ level in the scores for Item 2, $F(1, 136) = 15.78, p = .00$, and Item 11, $F(1, 136) = 23.17, p = .00$.

Table 8

Means and standard deviations for scores given to Item 2 and Item 11

| | Item 2 (use of Japanese) | | Item 11 (native speakers) | |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| English | 3.85 | 1.21 | 4.74 | 1.01 |
| non-English | 4.66 | 1.17 | 3.87 | 1.02 |

Table 9

One-way analysis of variance for scores given to Item 2 and Item 11

| | <i>df</i> | <i>SS</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Item 2 (use of Japanese) | | | | |
| Between groups | 1 | 22.31 | 22.31 | 15.78** |
| Within groups | 136 | 192.30 | 1.41 | |
| Item 11 (native speakers) | | | | |
| Between groups | 1 | 25.74 | 25.74 | 23.17** |
| Within groups | 136 | 151.08 | 1.11 | |

** $p < .01$

These results suggest that the students who are majoring in a foreign language other than English have stronger extrinsic motivation and the students who are majoring in English have a stronger preference for communicative style. The results also suggest that the non-English majors have a stronger preference for receiving explanation in Japanese whereas the English majors have a stronger preference for having native speakers as their teachers.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate whether there would be any difference in motivation and instructional preferences between English majors and non-English majors who are taking classes of the Special English Program at Kyoto Sangyo University. 138 students were asked to answer a questionnaire that consisted of 20 items dealing with motivation and 11 items dealing with instructional preferences. A factor analysis identified three factors, Extrinsic Motivation, Intrinsic Motivation, and Anxiety, as the motivational constructs. An analysis of variance showed that there was a significant difference in Extrinsic Motivation between English majors and non-English majors. The non-English majors had stronger extrinsic motivation. A factor analysis and an ANOVA were also conducted on the 11 items of Instructional Preferences. Two factors, Traditional Style and Communicative Style, were identified as the preferential constructs. The results also showed that there was a significant difference in preference for communicative style between English majors and non-English majors. English majors had a stronger preference for communicative style. An ANOVA was also performed on items 2 and 11 of Instructional Preferences. The results showed that non-English majors had a stronger preference for receiving explanation in Japanese whereas English majors had a stronger preference for having native speakers as their teachers.

There were limitations in this study. First, the survey was conducted only in my classes because of time constraint, although I wanted to conduct this study as part of the program evaluation. If students in the other classes had participated in the study, the results could have been

different. Second, the items in the questionnaire were chosen based on my own interest, and they were limited in number. More items that could cover motivational constructs thoroughly could have brought more valuable results and information. Further research needs to be conducted with improvements over the weaknesses of this study.

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Appendix

The questionnaire items (before randomization)

Intrinsic Motivation

- 1 I enjoy learning English very much.
- 2 Learning English is a hobby for me.
- 3 Learning English is a challenge that I enjoy.
- 4 I don't enjoy learning English, but I know that learning English is important for me.
(reverse-coded)
- 5 I wish I could learn English in an easier way, without going to class. (reverse-coded)

Extrinsic Motivation

- 6 English is important to me because it will broaden my view.
- 7 I am learning English because my parents want me to improve my English.
- 8 Being able to speak English will add my social status. (Other people will respect me more.)
- 9 I am learning English because I want to spend a period of time in an English-speaking country.
- 10 I want to learn English because it is useful when traveling in many countries.
- 11 I am learning English to become more educated.
- 12 I am learning English to get a qualification such as STEP, TOEFL, or TOEIC.
- 13 I am learning English because I want to get a better job.
- 14 I am learning English because I want to communicate with people throughout the world.
- 15 Increasing English proficiency will have financial benefits for me.

Anxiety

- 16 I feel uncomfortable if I have to speak/answer in my English class.
- 17 It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.
- 18 I don't like to speak often in my English class because I am afraid that my teacher will think I am not a good student.
- 19 I am afraid other students will laugh at me when I speak English.
- 20 I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.

Instructional Preferences

- 1 During English class, I would like to have only English spoken.
- 2 In my English class, the teacher should explain things in Japanese sometimes in order to help us learn.
- 3 I like English learning activities in which students work together in pairs or small groups.
- 4 I prefer to work by myself in English class, not with other students.
- 5 Grammar should be emphasized in English class.
- 6 Pronunciation should be emphasized in English class.
- 7 Reading and writing should be emphasized in English class.
- 8 Listening and speaking should be emphasized in English class.
- 9 I prefer an English class in which there are lots of activities that allow me to participate actively.
- 10 I prefer to sit and listen, and don't like being forced to speak in English class.
- 11 English classes should be taught by native speakers.

(1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly disagree, 4 = Slightly agree, 5 = Agree, 6 = Strongly agree)